THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF ADULT EDUCATION IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND, 1930S-1960S[1]

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Introduction

This article forms part of a wider study of the attempts by various agencies, organisations and individuals to promote the professionalisation of adult education in Aotearoa New Zealand. The concepts of 'profession' and 'professionalisation' are not innocent ones. In Larson's words, the notion of 'profession' is "... one of many 'natural concepts', fraught with ideology, that social science abstracts from everyday life"(Larson, 1979: xi). It is a concept that has been used to shape the material and social conditions of vast numbers of people throughout the twentieth century (See for example Perkin, H., 1989).

The professionalisation of any occupation or field of activity may be seen as a two-edged sword: it is a process that is riddled with contradictions. Thus for example, the professionalisation of an occupation or field of activity may serve to raise and maintain a sense of vocation, to raise and preserve the ethical standards and levels of competence of practitioners, and to provide mechanisms to protect the public from misuse or abuse by members of the profession. Simultaneously, it has been argued that under conditions of modern capitalism these very same process of professionalisation constitute one of the key exclusionary devices by means of which the bourgeoisie constructs and maintains itself as a class(Parkin, 1979), as well as providing some of the key mechanisms by means of which the subordination of women has been maintained(Witz, 1992).

Claims to the establishment and recognition of an occupation as a profession are generally based on a number of criteria. These include: the establishment of a regulatory body (generally recognised in law and containing substantial representation by members of the occupation) to ensure that the standards of performance of individual members of the occupation are maintained; the establishment and enforcement of a code of conduct; the establishment and maintenance of a codified body of knowledge and expertise which provides the ideological basis for the claim to the existence of a profession; and mechanisms to control the numbers, selection and training of new entrants to the profession.

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Larson (1979) has argued that a key element in the professionalisation of any occupation involves the construction and use of scientific knowledge and the systematic training and credentialling of practitioners in order to control a market share of a service economy. Without a more or less standardised body of accredited knowledge and systematised training of practitioners in its application and use, an occupation cannot control its share of the market and will not professionalise successfully. Knowledge production and practitioner training are thus central issues in the professionalisation process.

Drawing on Larson's theoretical framework and using a discourse analysis of the texts contained in the seven handbooks published between 1934 and 1989 by the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education and its predecessors, Wilson(1993: 2) has argued that "... the best way to understand the modern period (from the 1920s on) of adult education in the U.S.A. is to understand it in this professionalization context". Indeed the increasing professionalisation of the field in North America and to a lesser extent in Europe, and with it the shift away from movement-based education for social change, has been widely documented (See for example Collins, 1991; Cunningham, 1989; and Welton, 1987).

It would appear that a useful distinction may be drawn between two different senses in which the notions of 'professionalisation' and 'profession' have been used in the adult education literature. These may be characterised as the strong and weak senses of the concept. It is professionalisation in the strong sense of the term that has been referred to above. In this sense the professionalisation of adult education depends inter alia on the production of a more or less standardised, research-based body of knowledge and skills, and the development of extensive and intensive programmes of initial pre-service education and training for practitioners leading to the award of professional credentials.

The professionalisation of adult education, in the weaker sense of the term, depends on the development of a common sense of identity among people engaged in similar kinds of activity who share a common sense of purpose. It generally implies the establishment of some form of organisational framework through which this sense of common purpose can be expressed, and may involve the establishment of ongoing educational and training programmes for practitioners that is not necessarily focused on the acquisition of credentials. Thus for example Harris and Willis(1992: 119) are clearly using professionalisation in its weaker, more fluid and open sense when they assert that: "In Australia, adult and community education (ACE) may be considered to have become a profession in 1960 in the sense that a national association and a national journal were

established in that year to represent the interests of hundreds of adult and community educators across the nation".

In Aotearoa New Zealand moves to professionalise the field of adult education, in both the strong and weak senses of the term, appear to have come more slowly, erratically and ambiguously than in many other countries. In order to understand such moves as have been made, as well as to understand why these moves have been so relatively limited, it is necessary to place them in a broad historical context. The history of adult education in Aotearoa has been quite extensively documented by such writers as Thompson (1945), Consultative Committee (1947), Hall (1970), Williams (1978), and Dakin (1979, 1988 and 1996). In addition, elsewhere (Tobias, 1994 and 1996) I have attempted to analyse this history in the light of the wider social, economic and political forces that have shaped it. In this article I will draw on all these sources as well as other primary and secondary sources.

Initiatives of the 1920s and 1930s

Prior to the formation of the WEAs in Auckland, Canterbury, Dunedin, Invercargill and Wellington between 1914 and 1915, adult education and training had been undertaken by a very wide range of people and organisations. However few if any would have identified themselves as adult educators or as educators of adults. With the establishment of the WEAs and especially with the appointment of the first full-time WEA staff in the early 1920s, we see the emergence of the first involvement by the state and by the university colleges in the deliberate and formalised promotion of adult education and almost certainly the emergence of the first forms of self-conscious professional identification with a field called adult education. Elsewhere (Tobias, 1996) I have discussed the sense of social purpose and social movement that drove the early founders, and there is no evidence of any exclusive or monopolistic tendencies within the professionalisation projects of that time. The number of full-time staff was small and scattered across the country. By the end of 1922 five full-time tutors were employed and although this grew to seven by 1925, there was no further growth in the 1920s. Then in 1933 in the midst of the depression years the government cut its grant to the WEA, and the number of full-time staff was reduced to four. It was not until the later years of the 1930s that the number of full-time tutors began to rise again and by 1944 the number of these tutors had risen to fourteen.

In the mid-1930s the beginnings of economic recovery and the election of a Labour Government created the climate for a number of state sponsored and supported initiatives. The grants to the WEAs which had previously been made by the state and administered

through the university colleges were restored; in 1936 the Women's Co-ordinating Committee was formed in order to facilitate the administration of state grants to rural women's organisations; and in 1938 following an extensive and at times divisive period of consultation the first Council of Adult Education was established by Act of Parliament. This Council was given wide-ranging terms of reference. It was expected to co-ordinate the activities of organisations concerned with adult education, to promote adult education, to advise the Minister on the annual grant to be made to the University of New Zealand for adult education, and to take responsibility for the distribution and control of funds made available by government for adult education. It immediately set about the task of inviting the university colleges in each of the main centres to form district advisory committees. In addition it sought the views of a wide range of voluntary and statutory organisations on their funding requirements. In view of the diverse character of the field of adult education and the conflicts generated in the consultative process, it may be seen as somewhat surprising that the government of the time should have taken the step of setting up the Council of Adult Education, the first such statutory body in the world; the limited success of the Council in achieving its goals is however not surprising. In fact its powers were limited; it commanded few of its own resources and employed no staff. Indeed Dakin (1988) implies that the establishment of such a statutory body may well have inhibited the development of the kind of membership-based organisation that did emerge somewhat later in several other countries.

In addition to the Council of Adult Education, a number of other relevant statutory organisations were established, several of which had grown out of the pioneering work undertaken by the WEA and by people associated with the WEA. They included the National Broadcasting Service, (1936), the Country Library Service (1938), and the National Council of Physical Welfare and Recreation (1937) which was established along with twenty-seven district committees and a new physical welfare and recreation branch containing a significant number of staff located in the Department of the Interior. It was expected that the work of each of these agencies would have an important adult education dimension.

The previous fifty years had witnessed not only the emergence of monopoly capitalism and the growth of large private and state organisations, inevitably accompanied by greater rationalisation, bureaucratisation and specialisation, together with the application of science-derived knowledge and technology to an increasingly wide range of human endeavours. They had also witnessed the growth of trade unionism, and the professionalisation of an increasing number of occupations including the so-called 'old' professions of medicine and law together with a number of newer ones including engineering, accountancy, dentistry, nursing and teaching (Olsen, 1992). As a

consequence of these longer term trends as well as the initiatives taken by the Labour government in the fields of health, education and welfare, a new sense of professional identity and cohesion might have been expected to emerge among the increasing number of people involved in the education and training of adults.

In point of fact the new initiatives could in no sense be said to have produced any significant attempts to professionalise the field of adult education or any new sense of professional identity and cohesion amongst workers involved in adult education. Indeed if anything the reverse appears to have occurred. Although the remarkable series of conferences of progressive educators including adult educators from North America organised by the New Education Fellowship in 1937, as well as international study-tours by people such as the Somersets, may well have strengthened professional links between key educators in Aotearoa and progressive educators in other countries, some of whom were engaged in attempts to strengthen and professionalise adult education, it would seem that they had little impact here in building a basis for cohesive or coordinated professionalisation of the field. The apparent sense of unity and cohesiveness that had characterised the field in the early 1920s, and that took organisational form in the collaboration between WEAs and university colleges, had already been eroded by the growth of other organisations such as the Association for Country Education.

The growing field of adult education was more than anything else characterised by diversity. The historical claims to regional and local autonomy, the increasing differences between urban and rural areas, and the increasing differentiation and specialisation of functions and clientele within the field of adult education militated against any centralising, standardising or professionalising tendencies. Indeed many of the principles of adult education were seen to be directly opposed to the processes of rationalisation, bureaucratisation, specialisation and credentialism which were as necessary to the development of formal education as they were to the professionalisation of occupations. By way of contrast, the vitality of the field of adult education was seen to rest on its voluntary character and on the fact that it was to a large extent based on the work of a diverse array of voluntary organisations as well as on the work of 'gifted amateurs out to change the world'.

Some moves to rationalise and professionalise adult education did take place in the early 1940s. However these did not arise directly out of the initiatives described above, but rather out of the Second World War. Initial efforts were devoted exclusively to the training of personnel needed to meet the military and economic requirements of a nation at war. Little more was done by way of extending the provision of general education for the first two years. Despite exhortations and advice from the WEA and the Council of

Adult Education, the New Zealand government was somewhat slower than those in many other Commonwealth countries to establish educational services for servicemen and women. Nevertheless, when it did move to set up the Army Education and Welfare Service (AEWS) in 1942, rapid progress was made in mobilising a significant body of educational officers and others dedicated to the provision a very wide range of educational services, and by 1945 the AEWS comprised a total of 64 officers, 370 military personnel of other ranks, and 11 civilians - a total staff establishment of 445(Consultative Committee, 1947: 76).

Post World War Two Expansion

After the war the processes of expansion, coordination, rationalisation and differentiation of function within the field of adult education and training continued apace. The impact of the AEWS on the development of technical and distance education is clear. The Technical Correspondence School (later Institute) was established in 1946. Following the war-time experience the Correspondence School (which had been established in the 1920s) began to extend its programmes to serve the interests of adults. In some centres the technical schools, technical high schools, and district high schools extended their programmes of evening classes. In 1948 the Council for Technical Education and the Trades Certification Board were established, and with the amendment of the Apprentices' Act in that year provision was made for the first time for the formal education of apprentices. In addition, in 1947 the Industrial Training Service was established in the Labour Department based on the experience of Training Within Industry (TWI) schemes in the UK and USA before and during the war.

These developments extended considerably the opportunities for young working people and adults to continue their education and training. They also had the effect of increasing considerably the number of people in occupations that were directly involved in providing education and training for adults. Despite this they had little if any impact on the professionalisation of adult education. Apart from the school teachers, many of whom were member of the Technical Teachers' Association, most of the people engaged in these forms of education and training were drawn from the ranks of tradespeople, technicians, and supervisors. They were for the most part unionised workers who identified with their trades, their technical occupations or with their work-places or organisations. They did not see themselves as educators and did not identify with the field of adult education.

Training in the workplace

Apart from the teachers employed in schools, most of these people received little or no training for their work in education and training. The one notable exception to this was the training provided for trainers in the Industrial Training Service's (ITS) Training within Industry (TWI) Scheme. This scheme was based on similar schemes that had been developed by the British and American governments during the Second World War to increase production to meet the requirements of the war effort. It was introduced into Aotearoa New Zealand on the initiative of Elizabeth Huntington, an educationalist and former managing director of a clothing factory, who was impressed by the potential benefits of the scheme when she was visiting war-time Britain on a British Council scholarship to study personnel management. On her return home she was successful in persuading key people in government to investigate and trial the scheme, and in 1947 it was established in the Department of Labour. The attractiveness of the scheme lay in the fact that it was seen as 'not merely a training scheme', but rather as 'a production technique'. It was to be used by management in both private and public sectors 'to achieve concrete production goals' as well as to effect 'reduced costs, fewer accidents and improved morale'(Adams, 1986: 1). A key principle underlying the scheme was the unwavering insistence of the TWI Service that the scheme would not be developed in any organisation until the very top management had gained a high level of commitment, understanding and appreciation of it. To this end a ten-hour 'appreciation programme' for top management was provided(Adams, 1986: 7-8).

Four different TWI programmes were developed over the years. The Job Instruction Programme, which was the first and most widely used programme, was intended to improve supervisors' instructional and communication skills. Between 1947 and 1970 46,125 managers and supervisors participated in the Job Instruction programmes offered by the Industrial Training Service. The Job Relations Programme was designed to develop leadership skills and skills in handling human relations problems in the workplace. This programme was launched in 1954 and was the second most widely used programme with 16,397 managers and supervisors having participated by 1970. The Job Methods Programme was designed to help supervisors make the best use of available labour, materials and machines by developing skills in work study and job design. This programme was launched in 1960 and by 1970 3,050 managers and supervisors had participated. Finally, in 1969 a fourth programme on Programme Development was introduced with the aim of training managers and supervisors to engage in systematic planning to solve organisational problems through training and by other means(Adams, 1986: 5-6 & 16-17).

Each aspect of the work of the TWI service was the product of extensive international as well as local research and development. The entire process of organisation and training

was highly systematised, standardised, codified and, as far as possible, routinised. Thus, in the first instance, considerable time, effort and experimentation was devoted to the production of very detailed Training Manuals for each of the programmes. Robert Adams points out that one of the early questions faced by the those developing the programmes was whether the Manuals should serve as guides for trainers, leaving them with a good deal of discretion in deciding how they would present the material or whether they should be complete manuals to be used by trainers to put over the material word for word - verbatim. He reports that: "After much consideration and experiment the latter method was adopted. This ensured good quality control. It was found that trainers could be taught to glance down at the open Manual, pick up the next few words with their eye and then say them to the Group. After a little practice Trainers could do this so smoothly and naturally that there was no suggestion of their 'reading' the Manual to their audience. They were also taught how to introduce phrases and expressions and examples suitable to the background of the group with whom they were dealing"(Adams, 1986: 6). In addition a standardised 'card' was produced for each programme summarising the content, and at the conclusion of each programme every participant was provided with this 'card' to provide reinforcement back on the job. Secondly, six principles were identified that underpinned any successful TWI programme. These principles focused on the need to: determine objectives; fix responsibility for results; ensure adequate coverage; coach on the job; report results; and give credit for results. One task of the trainers was to ensure that managers and supervisors could apply these principles in their organisations. Thirdly, six steps or phases were followed by trainers in planning and organising programmes within organisations. These were captured in a mnemonic 'Asdric' (Appreciation, Survey, Development, Revision, Integration, and Continuing use) which was widely used in the service, and each of these phases was broken down into a further set of steps or phases.

It was recognised at an early stage that the recruitment and training of appropriate people to serve as trainers was critical to the success of the scheme. As far as recruitment was concerned, two factors were seen as paramount. In the first place, the trainers had to have credibility with the people with whom they were to work: this implied the desirability of recruiting trainers from the ranks of supervisors in industry and the public service. Secondly, they had to have the ability and communication skills required for the work. Following an initial process of careful selection prospective trainers were put through an initial 10-hour programme. This was followed by participation in an appropriate TWI Institute. These were intensive courses lasting 40 hours, one for each of the four TWI Programmes. If they appeared suitable as trainers they were then taken through an Observation Group - a ten hour programme - in which they watched and listened to an experienced TWI trainer presenting the Manual, and discussed it with him/her after each session. New trainers then took their first groups - presenting the programmes

themselves, while the experienced trainer acted as observer and gave further coaching and help to the new trainers between sessions(Adams, 1986: 6).

I have described the TWI scheme and the training programmes for trainers within this scheme at some length because they exemplify so clearly the impact of Taylorist and scientific management theories on one important form of adult learning and training. The TWI trainers did not identify themselves as adult educators and there is no evidence that the adult educators of the time made any attempt to establish links with the TWI trainers. It is nevertheless clear that the TWI was in fact providing a significant educational service. For many of the participants in TWI programmes this was in fact one of the few structured learning opportunities that they would encounter in their adult years. Moreover the TWI scheme claimed to be based on scientifically-derived, universalistic forms of knowledge; it provided highly systematised training, and required a high level of technical and interpersonal competence on the part of its practitioners. It shared these features with other occupations whose leaders were seeking the status of a profession. On the other hand, most practitioners were drawn from the ranks of blue-collar workers with little formal education and no extended pre-service education, training and socialisation. The TWI scheme itself was hierarchical in structure with most of the senior positions being occupied by graduates who were seen to have the specialised and technical knowledge on which the scheme was based.

The 1947 Report of the Consultative Committee on Further Education for Adults

The experience of the AEWS in the war years also had an impact on those responsible for setting in place the framework and structure for the development of general adult education in the post-war years. A Consultative Committee consisting of five people with many years of experience in adult education was appointed in 1945, and its very comprehensive report was published in 1947. Impressed with the organisation and work of the AEWS, as well as with the large amount of state funding it had received during war-time, the Committee envisaged large scale expansion of resources in peace-time as well. Accordingly it recommended that the total funds provided by the State for adult education should be increased four-fold over a five year period, and that additional ad hoc funds be made available as required for community centres and other improvements to the equipment and physical facilities available for adult education. It recommended further that a strengthened National Council of Adult Education should be established and that the funds allocated for adult education by the State should be administered by the National Council, and not as previously by the University of New Zealand. Mindful however of the considerable opposition to any form of centralised control and bureaucracy, the Committee considered that the National Council should employ only one executive officer and perhaps one or two tutors. In addition it recommended that the

National Council should consist of two representatives of each of the four regions plus six other members. In this way it sought to ensure that regional interests on the National Council would be protected.

A central concern of the Committee was to foster regional and local independence and initiative. Accordingly it recommended that each university college should form a Regional Council of Adult Education which would 'assume active responsibility for all forms of adult education in its district'(Consultative Committee, 1947: 109). It was envisaged that most of the funds received by the National Council would be distributed to the university colleges in each major centre, and that these in turn would act in accordance with advice received from the regional councils. With the anticipated increasing diversification and growth of adult education, the Committee considered that the control of adult education by the university colleges could be expected to diminish, and that the regional councils would "...in time acquire a standing comparable with that of a college council itself, and should then be given autonomous status"(Consultative Committee, 1947: 54).

It was envisaged that the regional councils, and in particular the full-time tutors who were to be employed by the regional councils, would support the existing work being undertaken by voluntary organisations and statutory agencies, and encourage the formation of local adult education committees as well as committees in such specialised fields as music, art, drama, women's education, worker's education, and Maori education. It was also considered that the Councils would continue the process of experimentation with the development of community centres, and that closer links with local authorities, technical colleges, schools and other agencies should be established and that greater use should be made of the existing provisions contained in the Manual and Technical Regulations.

If many of the Committee's recommendations were necessarily concerned with finance and structures, it would seem that the key to the realisation of its vision rested on the establishment of a very much larger corpse of full-time adult education workers or tutors in each region. It noted that '... without tutors, even the most perfectly organised system of adult education is doomed to failure'(Consultative Committee, 1947: 17). Accordingly, it recommended that ' a staff of resident (or 'area') tutors, together with a team of specialist itinerant tutors' be built up in each district(Consultative Committee, 1947: 19). It envisaged that the number of tutors should be increased to about 60 within a five-year period. These tutors were to be employed by the Regional Councils and work in teams to ensure that the best possible services were provided to meet the requirements of voluntary organisations and groups in each district and that local initiatives and special interests

were encouraged and supported. In order to make the best possible use of staff teams the Committee recommended that as soon as possible a full-time director should be appointed in each district with responsibility to act as chief executive officer and secretary of the Regional Council.

In its thinking about the qualities, skills and training requirements of the full-time tutors who would play such a key role in the implementation of the new scheme, as in so much else, the Committee must have drawn on the extensive experience and knowledge of its secretary, A.B. Thompson. In 1945 he had published a book in which he undertook a thorough and comprehensive analysis of the history and current position of adult education as well as developing a set of detailed proposals for future development. In that book he discusses the nature of the jobs that should be undertaken by the various kinds of tutors or 'adult education workers', and explores in some depth the kinds of people who should be recruited to these jobs, and the training, support and career structure that would be required. The job descriptions that he provides are ones that combine, on the one hand, teaching and, on the other hand, programme planning and organisation. Both teaching and organisational work he saw as important components of all tutors' jobs. However in the case of specialist tutors the emphasis was to be on teaching, whereas in the case of the resident or organising tutor the emphasis was to be on programme organisation. The latter included such tasks as 'finding latent needs or even creating needs', "selling' adult education', being 'responsible for using or co-ordinating ... local services', and gaining access to all national and regional services that might be useful to the development of adult education(1945: 293).

Thompson developed a considerable list of the qualities and abilities that would be required of the people who were to be appointed to these positions. The first of these was that they were to have an 'understanding of men and women'. They should have an 'ability to approach people', an 'understanding of community life, experience of the adult world', and 'an appreciation of the cultural life (in the broadest sense of the term)'. They must have 'an expert knowledge in at least one field', but their 'learning or skill should not be of the narrowly specialised type', and they must have 'an awareness of the social significance of the task being undertaken'. They should have 'patience and thoroughness, warmth, enthusiasm .. and willingness to learn'. Although they might be drawn 'from almost any walk of life', they should be well educated people. However they 'must have no trace of intellectual arrogance, and must realise that there are things learned in the school of experience that are as true as those contained in books'(1945: 291-2). Thompson also considered that some previous contact with adult education, possibly as a part-time tutor, was desirable(1945: 294).

With regard to the training of these tutors, Thompson considered that this should take place once they had been appointed and 'should not be a long process' possibly taking place on a short intensive course. He considered that 'the art of teaching adults is not easily reducible to clear-cut principles'. Nevertheless there were 'some things that could be done to help prospective tutors. They should be made aware of the pioneering nature of their work; they should receive some instruction in elementary psychology, should know something of sociology and of the principles on which community surveys are conducted, and should learn something of what is done in other countries'. The emphasis should, however, be on the practical. 'The conducting of discussion groups, the keeping of the necessary records, the methods of preparing and presenting lectures and of organising art and craft groups - these are things that are best learned by watching someone who knows how to do them. A couple of months as observer/assistant at some established centre, or, better still, at more than one, should be sufficient' for their initial training. However, the "in-service' training of tutors should not be neglected, and frequent opportunities for discussion of common problems with tutors in their own or neighbouring districts and for keeping abreast of new developments in their special branches of adult education' were seen as important, as was the provision of opportunities for study and research. (1945: 294-5).

In order to attract and retain suitable people to work in adult education Thompson emphasised the importance of providing not only an attractive initial salary but also a salary scale and opportunities for advancement and promotion. He argued that the working conditions of tutors in the past as well as the limited opportunities for advancement had not been conducive to the retention of experienced tutors. Clearly he had in mind the kind of salary and career structure that would attract and retain tutors of the highest calibre.

The recommendations of the Consultative Committee on the recruitment, training and conditions of service of tutors fitted closely with the thinking of Thompson. Despite arguments to the contrary, it considered that all tutors should be expected to carry out both organising and tutorial functions. However not all tutors would have strengths in each area: hence the importance of team-work in each district. The Committee considered that most of the tutors would be recruited from within the education service and suggested that their conditions of service be integrated with those of other sectors of education. It recognised the importance of providing conditions of service and salary scales that would attract a high calibre of person to the field of adult education. To this end it made a number of recommendations including the introduction of a national salary scale, with tutors receiving salaries no less than those of secondary teachers with comparable qualifications and experience, adequate travel allowances, 'reasonably long

vacations' and 'adequate opportunity to prepare their work and to meet other professional people with kindred interest'(Consultative Committee, 1947: 21).

With regard to training, the Committee endorsed the view that success in adult education depended on the personality and enthusiasm of the tutors, their thorough knowledge of the subjects they teach, their genuine liking for all sorts of people, and their ability to enter imaginatively into their experiences. It was considered that training would be needed in the organisational routines and that there was 'much to learn about the theory and practice of adult education'. It suggested that '... the best type of training (if this rather inappropriate term is to be used) is a period of 'in-training''. New tutors should spend time during their first year based at regional headquarters working in close association with other more experienced people. Special attention was given to the training of people for work in community centres. In this connection it was suggested that a 'typical' community centre should be set up as a training centre, with suitable people being appointed as assistants in order to qualify for full charge in other centres. 'During a year at the centre they should study the problems of adult education as a whole, and should gain experience in conducting courses and organising groups'(Consultative Committee, 1947: 22).

In the light of this, what can be said about Thompson's and the Committee's views on the professionalisation of adult education? On the one hand, they clearly wished to see the development of a corps of paid professional workers who would be educational leaders in their communities, who would identify themselves as adult educators and develop lifelong careers and commitments to the field, and who would acquire the special combination of knowledge, skills and sensitivities required for effective work in adult education. In this sense they were committed to the professionalisation of the field. On the other hand they had no sense that there was any esoteric and standardised body of knowledge associated with the field of adult education which required a lengthy period of training and credentialling; nor did they seek in any significant way to ground the theory and practice of adult education in science-derived knowledge or in technology; there were, in Thompson's view no clear-cut principles of adult education that could be taught in a systematic fashion.

Developments under the 1947 Adult Education Act: 1947-1960

Most of the recommendations of the Consultative Committee were accepted by the Labour government and late in 1947 an Adult Education Act was passed by Parliament which established a National Council of Adult Education (NCAE) with wide terms of reference and statutory authority to employ its own staff and regional councils of adult

education based on each of the four university colleges. The new councils set about their tasks with some vigour. In particular, the new NCAE applied to the government for substantial increases in grants, and although the grants received were not as large as were requested, they were nevertheless sufficient to provide for significant immediate expansion. In 1948 the NCAE was able to appoint its first executive officer to the position of National Secretary, and by 1948 each of the regional councils had appointed a full-time director. In addition the total number of tutors employed by the regional councils grew from 33 in 1948 to 46 in 1951, and then to 54 in 1955. The first few years of the new scheme were thus a time of vigorous and rapid expansion of community-based adult education, and Hall suggests that it was the small towns and country areas that benefited most from this expansion(1970: 105). Growth was particularly strong in such fields as drama, music-making, various arts and crafts and home science, and the appointment of the first Maori tutor by the Auckland Regional Council resulted in rapid expansion of cultural and community development programmes many of which were based on marae.

Both specialist and area tutors made a significant contribution to this expansion, and there is evidence that the tutors themselves, the regional councils and the National Council all contributed to a growing sense of professional identity among the tutors. In 1949 the NCAE organised the first in a series of triennial conferences for professional adult education staff. This two-day conference was held in Wellington, as was the second which was held in 1952. At the second conference in 1952 an Adult Education Staff Association was formed, and this association played an active part in planning the following two conferences, a four-day residential conference held in Christchurch in 1955, and a five-day residential conference held in Wellington in 1958. Dakin(1988: 30) points out that the NCAE did not convene any other general conferences on themes such as the performing arts or sciences in adult education that might have been of general interest to all those working in the field, whether as professionals or as voluntary workers. In 1952 the National Secretary of the NCAE instituted a *National Council of Adult Education Newsletter* which the NCAE continued to publish until 1970 when it was converted into the twice-yearly journal *Continuing Education in New Zealand*. It was intended that the *Newsletter* would act as a means of disseminating information about developments in adult education at home and abroad, and as a mouthpiece for tutors and others interested who wished to discuss issues pertinent to adult education in New Zealand. This *Newsletter* was, however, circulated almost exclusively to tutors and members of the national and regional councils. It was not made widely available to adult education students and other general readers as had been suggested by the Consultative Committee(Dakin, 1988: 38).

These moves to professionalise the work of the adult education tutors employed by the regional councils need to be seen within a wider context. In 1949 the National Party won the general election and the incoming government, as well as successive national governments which remained in office through most of the 1950s, were less than enthusiastic in their support for several of the initiatives that had been undertaken under the previous labour administration. The cultural and recreational activities of the physical welfare and recreation branch of the Department of the Interior were steadily wound down. In addition, the applications by the NCAE for increases in funding received in general a less than sympathetic response from government. Some additional funding was provided to cover increased costs, but very little to enable the regional councils to expand or to reduce the pressures on tutors. The very successes of the tutors in initiating new programmes and activities came to be seen by some of them as self-defeating, since they tended to give rise to increased expectations among the groups, organisations and communities with whom they were working - expectations that could not be met without further support from the NCAE and the state.

The NCAE, however, found itself in a somewhat weak position. Dominated by regional interests and with few direct links with the Department of Education, it was unable to assert its claims to the resources that might have enabled it to make a greater contribution to national policy development and thus to respond to pressures for more resources from the regions. Priorities within the education system were increasingly being given to the rapid expansion of secondary education. Moreover, as the 1950s progressed it became clear to the NCAE and to those involved in the regional councils that, at the same time that the NCAE was struggling to obtain any increases in state funding, considerable increases in state funding were being channelled to schools in terms of the Manual and Technical Regulations to run their evening classes for adults. The NCAE had no influence or control over these classes; they were administered by the Department of Education. However, as Dakin(1988: 51) notes, there was no departmental officer specialising in adult education whose job it was to oversee these classes. In other words, there was no national or regional co-ordination of these classes Moreover the adult education programmes offered by schools were not organised by staff who identified themselves as adult educators, but by day-school teachers, designated as evening class supervisors, working on an overtime basis who received honoraria for their work. Despite this, their growth was substantial, with enrolments doubling from 24,000 to 48,000 between 1950 and 1960. By 1960 £150,000 was being spent by the state on these classes for adults, whereas the NCAE grant for that year was £121,674.

As was noted earlier, although the 1947 Adult Education Act had required the university colleges to establish regional councils of adult education and to take their advice, it was

the colleges themselves that were responsible for adult education in their regions. The consultative committee's report on which the Act was based had argued that, with the anticipated growth and diversification of adult education, the regional councils should eventually gain full independence from university control. This view however could not be embodied in legislation, and although there were tutors and others who continued to argue that the maintenance of university control of adult education was incompatible with the development of a truly comprehensive adult education service, by the late-1950s the majority of adult education tutors as well as the directors were looking to achieve fuller integration within the university colleges rather than greater regional council autonomy. This view accorded closely with that expressed in the Report of the Committee on New Zealand Universities(Hughes Parry, D. (Chair), 1959). This report was critical of the lack of involvement of university councils and professorial boards at some universities in the work of the regional councils and recommended fuller integration of adult education in the universities and the further development of university extension activities.

Developments in the early 1960s

In line with other recommendations of the Hughes Parry report, in the early 1960s each of the university colleges became fully independent universities. The University of New Zealand was dissolved and in its place the University Grants Committee(UGC) was established. In view of this and in the light of the other difficulties experienced by the NCAE, the National Council itself in 1961 decided to undertake a review of its own functions and composition. In the course of this review it became clear that the Department of Education was not prepared to expand the coverage of its evening class programme in order to take over such areas of adult education as might be abandoned by the universities; nor would it appoint adult education staff to help co-ordinate the programmes organised by schools. This effectively closed off one possible direction for change(Dakin, 1988: 54).

Dakin(1988: 53) points out that another possibility was not even considered. At that time the Department of Education was seeking to reduce the barriers between general and technical education at secondary school level. The technical high schools were integrated within the general secondary school system, and some of the work which they had done was transferred to the newly established technical institutes. Indeed, from the early 1960s, with the establishment of the first technical institutes, the reorganisation of the Technical Correspondence School into the New Zealand Technical Correspondence Institute, and the establishment of the Central Technical College (in 1972 renamed the Central Institute of Technology), substantial growth took place in technical education to meet the requirements of an expanding industrial and technologically-based economy. Despite

this, no thought appears to have been given to the possibility of establishing some bridge between the 'vocational' and 'non-vocational' education of adults, and even as late as 1965 the National Council failed to make a submission to the government Commission of Inquiry into Vocational Training.

Following on from the NCAE's review, in 1963 a new Adult Education Act was passed by Parliament. This Act established a new National Council of Adult Education, the functions of which were in many respects as wide-ranging as those of the previous National Council. However, in addition to its general functions it was required more specifically to furnish information and advice to the University Grants Committee and the Department of Education on any matters relating to adult education, to advise and assist institutions and organisations involved in adult education, and to initiate exploratory activities, disseminate information, convene conferences and in general to foster co-operation in the field. The composition of the new NCAE was significantly different from that of the previous one. Firstly, all seats that had represented regional interests were eliminated. Secondly, the size of the Council was reduced to a maximum of seven members, with at least three being appointed from the university sector. Thus the new NCAE comprised the Director of Education, the Chair of the UGC, two members appointed by the UGC (one of whom had to be appointed from a panel of names submitted by voluntary organisations), and two members appointed by the Minister of Education (one of whom had to have experience in adult education). The Council also had the power to co-opt one additional member.

One of the most fundamental changes brought about by the Act was that the universities were no longer obliged to establish regional councils of adult education. They were left free to set up their own modes of operation and consultation, and each university set about the task of establishing its own department of university extension or extension studies. Nor were they any longer directly dependent on the NCAE for their funding. Decisions on this funding were now made by the University Grants Committee, albeit on the advice of the NCAE. Overall, the influence of the universities in the new scheme was strengthened at the expense of the voluntary organisations and especially that of the WEA. In addition, the Act did nothing to facilitate the incorporation of the adult education work of the schools or that of the newly emerging technical institutes within the field of adult education or to build bridges between those responsible for the various sectors of adult education. On the contrary, the years following the passage of the 1963 Act saw an increasing distancing of the new university-based departments and their lecturers, as they were now called, from the rest of the field of adult education. In order to maintain the financial support of the University Grants Committee as well as to maintain or enhance their academic and professional status within the universities, the

directors and staff of the new departments found themselves under pressure to re-define their roles and functions. The debate over appropriate roles and functions was not new. It had in fact surfaced periodically throughout the 1950s. Nevertheless the establishment of the new departments with the greater measure of university autonomy associated with it reinforced the need for the directors and staff to discriminate between those forms of adult education that were considered appropriate for universities to undertake and other forms of community-based adult education. These latter forms of adult education they were increasingly required to abandon at a time when there were no other agencies adequately staffed and resourced to pick them up.

From the point of view of the universities as well as that of the majority of the staff of the new departments, there were unquestionably sound arguments for the changes wrought by the 1963 Act. On the other hand, from the point of view of the development of a comprehensive adult education scheme such as had been envisaged by the Consultative Committee in 1947 and from the point of view of those concerned with the professionalisation of adult education in either the strong or weak sense these changes were an unmitigated disaster. Although the majority of staff in the new departments continued to identify themselves as adult educators and continued to perform the roles of adult education teachers and organisers, the majority identified themselves increasingly with the universities rather than with the wider field of adult education, and as new appointments came to be made greater stress was placed on academic qualifications and less on the qualities and experience required for adult education work. In a sense the skills and experience of the largest corps of professional adult educators in the country was largely lost to the wider field of adult education and recruited to serve the important but nevertheless limited field of university extension.

Conclusion

This article has examined the history of adult education in Aotearoa New Zealand between the 1920s and mid-1960s in order to identify those trends and events that had a bearing on the professionalisation of adult education. There is evidence to suggest that some attempts to professionalise the field in the weaker and more fluid and open sense of the term took place throughout the period. Initially these took shape within the context of an organisational alliance between the WEAs (which included representatives of the trade union movement) and the university colleges with some funding being provided by the state. The 1930s saw the growth of other voluntary organisations and of new potential constituencies for adult education services. The experience of the Army Education Service during the Second World War in providing a highly professionalised and comprehensive adult education service persuaded the consultative committee which was

appointed after the war to recommend the establishment of a more fully professionalised adult education scheme. These recommendations were largely accepted by the state, and the late-1940s and early 1950s saw considerable expansion of adult education and increasing professionalisation of the field.

However from the point of view of the continuing expansion and further professionalisation of the field the scheme contained a number of contradictions which inevitably gave rise to tensions and difficulties. Several of these including the tensions surrounding the issue of centralised versus regionalised decision-making as well as the difficulties experienced in building bridges with other sectors of education and training have been discussed. Other tensions arose out of the increased institutionalisation of adult education and the relative under-resourcing of voluntary organisations and especially the WEAs.

At a general level, one of the major contradictions underlying the scheme arose out of the fact that its success was seen by those involved to depend on the one hand on the maintenance of a high level of state funding to ensure that the scheme would be as comprehensive and broadly based as possible, and on the other hand on the maintenance of a high degree of autonomy and independence from the state which was seen as vital to the promotion of democratic values and the cultivation of freedom of thought and expression. The way in which it was hoped to achieve this was by basing the scheme, initially at any rate, on the university colleges in the hope that the regional councils would eventually achieve sufficient power and status to assert their own autonomy. The hopes of the consultative committee and of many of the professional staff involved did not materialise. Increases in state funding were not forthcoming. Instead the tutors saw state funds channelled into programmes of adult education offered by the schools with little if any direction being provided by professional adult education staff. Increasingly this led to pressures for the universities, newly independent from the early 1960s, to take over responsibility for the adult education work, and this in turn led to a re-definition of the roles of the new departments of university extension and the withdrawal of these departments from the provision of non-university work. The professional adult educators of the 1950s who were concerned to initiate and provide a wide variety of forms of learning opportunities for adults were by the mid-1960s being transformed into university academics concerned exclusively with the provision of university-level adult education programmes. And there was no other agency with the professional staffing and resources to pick up the pieces that were dropped.

By the mid-1960s, then, little if any progress had been made by those who had tried to promote the professionalisation of the field of adult education, in either sense of the term.

Practitioners were divided and tended to owe primary allegiance to their organisations and institutions; there was little sense of common purpose; 'vocational' and 'non-vocational' education for adults remained segregated; very little had been done to promote research and knowledge production; and no systematic educational or training programmes for adult educators had been established. In a future article I will examine the attempts that have been made since then to professionalise the field.

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